

AcE-Bs2014Seoul

Asian Conference on Environment-Behaviour Studies
Chung-Ang University, Seoul, S. Korea, 25-27 August 2014
“Environmental Settings in the Era of Urban Regeneration”

Evaluating Citizens’ Participation in the Urban Heritage Conservation of Historic Area of Shiraz

Sarvarzadeh S. Koorosh^{a,*}, Idid Sza^a, Foroozan Ahad^b

^bDepartment Urban and Regional Planning, Faculty of Built Environment, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Malaysia

^cScience and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Yasooj, Iran

Abstract

Today, citizen participation (CP) has become a global issue for mobilizing untapped human resources, and it has spread across the field of Urban Heritage Conservation (UHC). This study aims to examine an indicator-based approach for the subjective evaluation of CP practice in UHC initiatives in Shiraz. It employs a questionnaire survey of 384 residents who engaged in the UHC initiatives. Finding, particularly, demonstrated that participants desire to attend in a group discussion when the discussions are: respectful; possess mutual trust; respect to different points of view; equal opportunity to speak; offer common good; reciprocal dialogue; have a feedback communication.

© 2015 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

Peer-review under responsibility of Centre for Environment-Behaviour Studies (cE-Bs), Faculty of Architecture, Planning & Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia.

Keywords: Citizen participation; urban heritage conservation; evaluation; Shiraz

1. Introduction

At the last decades of the present century has already shown that there is a dramatic increase in citizen participation (CP) in the environmental decision-making process. This rise has been come both from by the public who want a larger share and role in the decisions that affect their living, and by agencies that recognize the importance of the absence of citizens in their decision-making process (Charnley & Engelbert, 2005). It is now considered that the main objectives of urban environmental management programmes require involving all people and agencies jointly. Despite the importance of CP in the decision-making process, it is clear that what is absent is effective monitoring instrument, particularly, to

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +60177491409; fax: +0-000-000-0000 .
E-mail address: ssarvarzadeh@yahoo.com

evaluate CP practices as a quantitative measure in assistance with mathematical method. In recent years, Most of historic cities in developing countries like Shiraz in Iran are faced with similar issues. On one hand, they are experiencing high development pressure and lack of concern for cultural heritage, and, on the other hand, there is less or no citizen participation in the different levels of the decision-making process in urban development and conservation (Kong & Yeoh, 1994; Steinberg, 1996). Therefore, this study aims to set out an indicator-based approach for the subjective evaluation of citizens' participation practice and people experiences in UHC initiatives in the Cultural-historic city of Shiraz. In fact, it carried out on two levels. One, the process they attended in it including group discussions on the issues of urban conservation in their area. Second, the outcomes created through the discursive interaction. The subjective evaluation means to prepare some information on: how citizens attend in the group discussions, what people thought they had learned and what they think about the results of their participations.

2. Issues and Challenges on Evaluating CP in UHC

A review of the literature on evaluating citizen participation processes indicates that there is a significant literature purposed to identify criteria and assign measurable (Beierle, 1999; Beierle & Cayford, 2002; Bradbury, 1998; Charnley & Engelbert, 2005; Chess & Purcell, 1999; Edwards, Hindmarsh, Mercer, Bond, & Rowland, 2008; Rowe & Frewer, 2000, 2004) (See table 1). As a matter of fact, there have always been the main challenges to outline the appropriate criteria for conducting an evaluation process (Mannarini & Talò, 2013). At the first time, in 1981, four major problems have been described by Rosener (1981) for conducting an evaluation process. First, the concept of participation is complicated, and it contains many values. Second, criteria that have been held are not many for judging success and failure in the exercise; third, it has been acknowledged that there are no any consensus methods that were built to evaluate criteria; lastly, the reliable measurement tools are not numerous.

In recent years, the complexity of new evaluation frameworks has intensified due to two reasons: one, numerous criteria have been theoretically considered by researchers; second, the different tools have been experimentally used to a different method (Mannarini & Talò, 2013). However, what appears increasingly clear that they could not be used globally, they are today's most commonly applied based on context-dependent (Mannarini & Talò, 2013; Webler & Tuler, 2001).

This study was intended to evaluate the process and the outcomes of citizens' participation in the urban heritage conservation. It has been carried out based on the evaluation framework outlined by Rowe and Frewer (2000, 2004), Edwards et al. (2008) and exactly the resultant of Mannarini et al. (2012). However, the study justified the criteria based on context- dependent characteristics through Semi-structured interview with groups of experts and practitioners in the city. The interview resulted that using these criteria are well suited to evaluate the process and outcomes of CP in the UHC initiatives in the city.

Table 1 shows two categories of the criteria, the process and the outcomes, used in the study which synthesize the evaluation criteria drawn from Rowe and Frewer (2000, 2004), Edwards et al. (2008) and Mannarini et al. (2012). Following Edwards (2008) and by Mannarini (2012), the process factor of CP was categorized into two groups. One, dialogue, which defines as the procedures of people interact with the other citizens including authorities. Second, knowledge/ understanding, which define as whatever the participant may discuss, create, build upon, innovate, and obtain in the process of the collective discussion. This type of category was inducted many evaluation studies in the last decades (Beierle & Cayford, 2002; Rowe & Frewer, 2000, 2004; Webler, 1995).

Table 1. Criteria of process and outcomes for evaluating CP in the UHC initiatives

| Criteria | | Explanation | Source | |
|--------------------------|----------|---------------------|--|--|
| Process | Dialogue | Equality | Participants are given equal opportunities to actively participate in the discussion | Gastil (2006), Steiner et al. (2003), Stromer-Galley (2007), Williamson (2004) |
| | | Trust | Participants interact in an amicable atmosphere, are polite and pay attention to the others | Edwards et al. (2008), Innes and Booher (2003), Nabatchi (2007) |
| | | Respect | Dialogue is free from bias, and participants are respectful of each other | Edwards et al. (2008), Steiner et al. (2003) |
| | | Disagreement | Participants welcome divergent opinions while aiming to achieve agreement | Nabatchi (2007), Stromer-Galley (2007), Steiner et al. (2003) |
| | | Reciprocity | Participants refer to the others’ discourse or link their discourse to topics and positions expressed by other participants | Stromer-Galley (2007) |
| Knowledge/ Understanding | | Common good | Participants provide justification in terms of the common good or propose ideas that would benefit the broader community rather than themselves or specific groups | Edwards et al. (2008), Nabatchi (2007), Steiner et al. (2003) |
| | | Argument | Participants provide and exchange arguments for their opinions and positions | Edwards et al. (2008), Stromer-Galley (2007), Steiner et al. (2003) |
| | | Understanding | Participants can understand the given information and material | Edwards et al. (2008), Hitchcock, MacBurney, and Parsons (2001), Nabatchi (2007) |
| | | Collective Learning | Participants have the opportunity to learn from each other. A variety of knowledge and positions are presented, shared and discussed | Edwards et al. (2008) |
| | | Reflexivity | Participants become aware of their thinking and reasoning or gain a deeper understanding of others’ positions | Edwards et al. (2008), Nabatchi (2007), van de Kerkhof (2006) |
| | | Topic | Participants refrain from discussing off-topic issues | Stromer-Galley (2007), Steiner et al. (2003) |

Source: Mannarini & Talò (2013)

3. Rational of the Evaluation Framework

Both the citizens' participation and the quality of deliberation frameworks purposed by Mannarini et al. (2013) were used to create measurement instruments for the evaluation of the participatory procedure in the facilitator bureau of UHC initiatives in Shiraz city. While the evaluation was concentrated on the process and outcomes, the relationships between citizens' perspective with their participation was ascertained in the study. Citizens' perspective was identified based on three independent variables: the place attachments, concerns to preserve cultural identity and the importance of CP in the UHC initiatives. It was considered, so that among the experts' judgment only the citizens' perspective in the form of three above independent variables was significant to the quality of deliberation framework. This option was consistent with the primary questions underlying the experts' semi-structured interview conducted in the study: citizen's participation is good to involve in the UHC initiatives? Does the place attachment, concerns to preserve cultural identity and the importance of CP in the UHC initiatives influence the citizens' future behavior? If so, the criteria evolution of the process and outcomes might be used as an indicator of empowering potential of citizen participation in the initiatives. Researcher conducted a study to address these questions into three stages. The first purpose was to validate two evaluation instruments (process and outcomes) by semi-structured interview. The second was to evaluate the process and the outcomes through questionnaire survey made by residents to predict their future engagement in the citizens' participation.

4. Case Study: Cultural-Historic Area of Shiraz City in Iran

Cultural and historic area of Shiraz is located on the center of the city. Its area is about 380 hectares, equal 3 percent of the total city (see map 1).

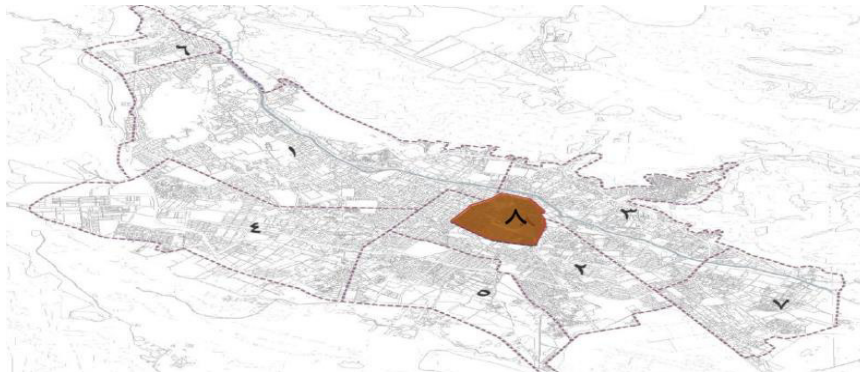


Fig. 1. The situation of Cultural-historic area of Shiraz city, in Iran

It also is like the initial core of the city which has passed many changes and developments during different periods. As an important epoch of the past, it is housed within itself many significant religious centers and monuments. In fact, locals recognize this area as The Old Shiraz. There are more than 400 monuments, eight historic gates and 12 quarters and 6 Cultural-Historic axes in the area which represent high cultural and environmental values of the lifestyle, social relations, customs, beliefs, history and art in the area.

It is now considered that preservation and conservation of these historical relics can assist to conserve cultural and historical identity, and also, it can re-life social and economic circumstances in the area. The

area includes 53000 people that about half of them are the aboriginal inhabitants. It should be noted that number of housing is 12706 units.

5. Facilitator Agencies or Urban Conservation as a Place for the Group Discussion

Urban conservation was faced with serious challenges during last decades. One of the major challenges was the lack of awareness from the intervention practices for urban planning and conservation in the historic area. The facilitator agencies are where, on one hand, they generate an appropriate motivation in the ownerships and inhabitants to take part in the urban planning and conservation initiatives. On the other hand, they possess the professional potentials to manage issues of urban conservation between the ownerships, inhabitant and local government. In general, they are established based on the following goals:

- To increase public awareness among ownerships and inhabitants, particularly the disadvantaged people,
- To recognize the structure and local characteristics as well,
- To identify the existing potentials in the area,
- To provide consultative services in the field of construction in deteriorated buildings,
- To aggregate the plots in the area in order to manage revitalization approach,
- To provide the discursive interactions in order to empowering people and to effect on the urban planning and conservation programmes.
- To encourage ownerships and inhabitants to make their effective partnerships in the programmes through establishing the discussion,
- And, lastly, to enhance the quality of life, security, place attachment, satisfaction of residence in the area.

6. Measures for Evaluation of Criteria

This study intended to evaluate the features of the discursive interaction (dialogue dimension) and the cognitive processes created by a group discussion (knowledge/ understanding dimension) among ownerships and local inhabitants. The evaluation criteria were extracted from the literature based on the most agreed-upon evaluative criteria on citizen participation.

The criteria for evaluation of dialogue dimension were six: equality, trust, respect, disagreement, reciprocity, and common good. The knowledge/understanding dimension consisted of five criteria: argument, understanding, collective learning, reflexivity, and the topic. According to Mannarini (2013), three items (totally 33 items) were created for each item in the evaluation process (Table 2). These items were gone to measure based on a seven-point scale (from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) through Delphi method. According to Edwards et al. (2008) and Mannarini (2013) a four-item scale has been designed to measure the perceived outcomes obtained by the discussion (See the four criteria and items at Table 2). It should be mentioned that each evaluation criteria got the following item: Discourse; did the current citizen's participation practice (CPP) create new knowledge on the issue of urban conservation under the group discussion? Networks; the new communicational networks were established through current CPP? Influence; people's formulated proposals will be implemented at the area? Achievement; did the current CPP yield proposals the adequately address the issues of UHC in the area?

Table 2. Criteria of evaluation and their items

| Row | Evaluation criteria | Item | Reliable (✓) Reject (X) |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Dialogue | | | |
| 1 | Respect | The discussion was bias free | X |
| 2 | | Some participants addressed the issue in a prejudicial way | X |
| 3 | | None of the ideas proposed was considered wrong or useless | ✓ |
| 4 | Trust | When I spoke, the others paid attention to what I was saying | ✓ |
| 5 | | During the discussion, I felt uncomfortable because of the behaviour of the other participants | X |
| 6 | | Despite the fact that participants held different viewpoints, everyone was treated with respect | ✓ |
| 7 | Disagreement | Despite the fact that there were different points of view, the group found an agreement on the basic points | ✓ |
| 8 | | Participants' views were so diverse that conflict arose within the group | ✓ |
| 9 | | In their discourse, participants emphasized the differences more than the commonalities between themselves and the other participants | X |
| 10 | Equality | Everyone had the opportunity to speak and to make him/herself heard | ✓ |
| 11 | | Some participants did not express their opinions as they would have liked | X |
| 12 | | As a matter of fact, some participants dominated the discussion | X |
| 13 | Common good | Participants strived to offer proposals that benefit the wider community | ✓ |
| 14 | | Participants were interested in feathering their own nest | X |
| 15 | | Above all, participants wanted to further their own interests | ✓ |
| 16 | Reciprocity | Participants were really engaged in a dialogue | ✓ |
| 17 | | For many participants, expressing their opinions was more important than engaging in a debate | ✓ |
| 18 | | No one really strived to understand other participants' reasons | X |
| Knowledge/ understanding | | | |
| 19 | Collective learning | I think that the discussion made me consider new perspectives on the issue at stake | ✓ |
| 20 | | Interacting with the other participants did not give me new insights on the topic | X |
| 21 | | Though my opinion is different, the discussion led me to consider the views of the others in a more favourable light | X |
| 22 | Reflexivity | Through the discussion, I increased my knowledge of the problem | ✓ |
| 23 | | I considered the suggestions from the other participants even though they did not match my opinions | X |
| 24 | | The discussion did not bring to the fore new aspects of the problem | X |
| 25 | Understanding | Some participants used complicated language | X |

| | | | |
|----|----------|--|---|
| 26 | | Some participants seemed confused | X |
| 27 | | Participants sought clarification and explanation of the views expressed | ✓ |
| 28 | Argument | The pros and cons of the various positions were sufficiently reasoned | ✓ |
| 29 | | All participants had valid reasons, even though I did not agree with most of them | X |
| 30 | | Many participants made a statement without explaining the reasons for their position | X |
| 31 | Topic | Participants' discourses kept to the subject at hand | ✓ |
| 32 | | Not all of the topics introduced by participants were relevant to the issue under discussion | X |
| 33 | | Participants' discourse gradually deviated from the initial topic | X |

Source: Mannarini & Talò (2013)

7. Results

As mentioned previously, in this study, the population was 384 people that selected through simple random cluster sampling from among ownerships and residents in the Cultural-historic area of Shiraz (See Figure 2). Table 3 shows the population of districts and sample size which was selected through cluster sampling method in the area.

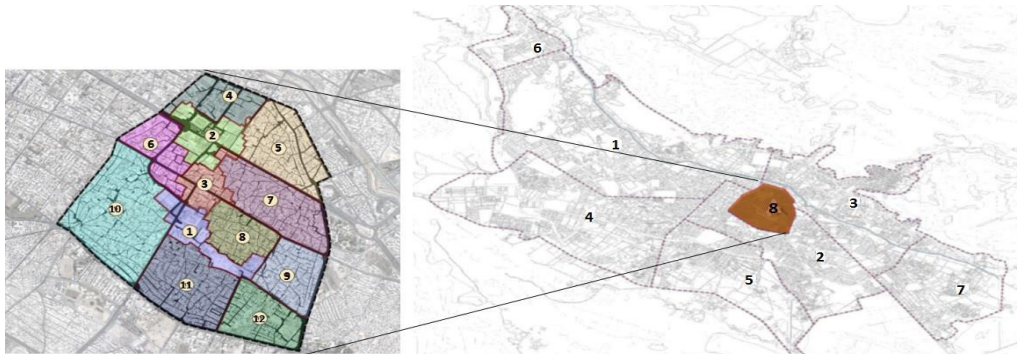


Fig. 2. Location of 12-fold districts in the historic area of Shiraz

Table 3. Cluster sampling in the urban districts of the historic area in Shiraz

| Districts | Urban districts in the historic area of Shiraz | | | | | | | | | | | | Total |
|------------|--|-----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|------|----|------|-------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | |
| Population | 60 | 135 | 29 | 14 | 6940 | 21 | 69 | 40 | 5294 | 1223 | 92 | 3846 | 5325 |
| | 2 | | 4 | 29 | | 91 | 98 | 89 | | 5 | 03 | | 6 |
| No items | 5 | 2 | 3 | 10 | 50 | 18 | 52 | 30 | 37 | 85 | 66 | 26 | 384 |

Sample Size:

$$N = 53256, z = 1.96, p \text{ and } q = 0.5, d = 0.05, n = 384$$

In the part of the analysis, the 33 evaluation items have been used for confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for testing the study's hypothesized structure. It is considered that the analysis demonstrated that the items saturated with two dialogues and knowledge/understanding factors. It also mentioned that these did not saturate with the outcomes factors. It means that two dialogues and knowledge/understanding criteria were correlated with items, but the secondary criteria (outcomes) did not correlate with the primary one. Then, the other CFA was applied to test the hypothesized model which corroborated the 11-item scale for using in the evaluation process (Table 2).

Totally, the scale consisted of 15 items. Each factor got one item, except for factors trust, disagreement, common good and reciprocity that were composed of two items. Figure 4 illustrates the final model outlined in the evaluation process of factors.

[378, 43] = 91.06; Sig. = .00 ; Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = .94

Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) = .905

root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .06 [.05; .08]; Sig. = .08

Standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) = .04

In the next stage, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted for testing the four items of outcome criteria (discourse, networks, influence, achievement). The results indicated that these criteria (totally) do not yield a good fit index with the dialogue and knowledge/understanding criteria. Unlike, the study made a constraint improve the quality of the model, namely the correlation between each of outcome criteria and dialogue and knowledge/understanding factors. Under this condition, the outcome factors yield good fit indexes.

[375, 1] = .43 ; Sig. = .59 ; Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = .74

Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) = .85

root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .12 [.00; .15]; Sig. = .71

Standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) = .015

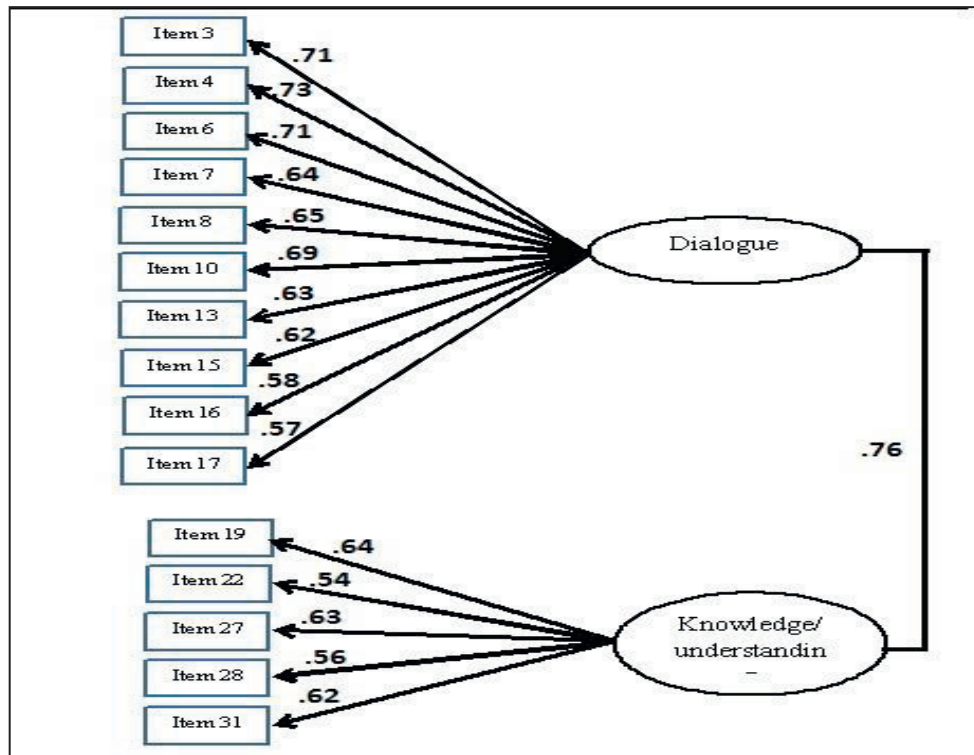


Fig. 3. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) for the dialogue and knowledge/understanding factors

Table 4. Correlation

| | | Concern to preserve cultural identity | The important of CP in the UHC plans | Dialogue | Knowledge | Outcomes | Likelihood of future participatio n |
|-----------------|--|--|---|----------|-----------|----------|--|
| UHC Criteria | Place attachments | -.14** | -.02 | -.34** | -.34** | -.28** | -.34** |
| | Concern to preserve cultural identity | | .33** | .23** | .27** | .31** | .27** |
| | The important of CP in the UHC plans | | | .15** | .19** | .19** | .06 |
| | Dialogue | | | | .68** | .56** | .49** |
| CP Criteria | Knowledge | | | | | .63** | .42** |
| | Outcomes | | | | | | .35** |

Table 5. Liner regression (dependent variable is CP

| | Beta (β) | t | Significance |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|-------|--------------|
| Dialogue | .23 | 3.68 | .00 |
| Knowledge | .05 | .68 | .50 |
| Outcomes | .13 | 2.19 | .03 |
| Place attachments | -.16 | -3.28 | .00 |
| Concern to preserve cultural identity | .15 | -3.07 | .00 |
| The important of CP in the UHC plans | -.03 | -.64 | .53 |

8. Discussion

In line with the literature, it should be noted that a participatory evaluation of citizens cannot ignore socio-economic and physical characteristics of places (Mannarini & Talò, 2013). Despite this belief that the evaluation instruments do not conclude universally (Webler & Tuler, 2001), there is a reasonable agreement on the evaluation for the process of CP as a general measure in the different settings (Mannarini & Talò, 2013). However, it cannot be denied that evaluating the other factor (outcomes) is varied based on characteristics of each participatory sitting (Mannarini & Talò, 2013).

As outlined above, the study aims to follow three objectives:

- to provide a cross-disciplinary literature on evaluation criteria and citizen participation,
- to determine the validity of the process and outcomes of citizen participation in the UHC initiatives in the Cultural-historic city of Shiraz.
- to determine the relations between the subjective evaluations made by ownerships and residents and three independent variables including the place attachment, concern to preserve cultural identity and the importance of CP in the UHC initiatives.

In general speaking, the results confirmed that, on one hand, the evaluation criteria of CP (process and outcomes) affect to the participatory behavior of citizens in the Cultural-historic area of Shiraz. Particularly, they showed that both ownerships and inhabitants desire to attend in a group discussion in the form of facilitator agencies when the discussions are: respectful; possess mutual trust; respect to different points of view; equal opportunity to speak; offer common good; reciprocal dialogue; have a feedback communication. More importantly, the results demonstrated that they are active in the CP for UHC initiatives when a dialogue is ongoing as a relational channel between people and local governments.

On the other hand, the study explored that there is a good correlation between the participatory behavior of the participants and three independent variables including the place attachment, concern to preserve cultural identity and the importance of CP in the UHC initiatives. However, these results are generalizable in the part of the process evaluation of CP, while they lack in generalization in the part of the outcomes because of the specific characteristics of different places.

9. Conclusion

To summarize, the study intended to propose an instrument to measure the process and outcomes of CP in the UHC initiatives for using agencies, researchers and practitioners who engaged in this field. It also aimed to explore this question that whether there is any correlation between CP's views and three above independent variables. In this regards, there are two measuring instruments to evaluate the process of CP: dialogue and knowledge/understanding. It seems that they can be held universally. Our study results indicate that these two dimensions are strongly correlated, and they are an appropriate response to this assumption that they can be considered as subcomponents of the participatory process of UHC in the study area. In the finding, we explore that what is a good citizen participation process is varied based on the perspective of citizens and organizer of participation. Indeed, they were different because their main goals and expectations were distinguished. Building on the literature review, it should be noted that self-report methods have to be triangulated with the others method as observational records of the process, interview and so on. In fact, the validity of conclusions is tied with triangulation. The study is a part of research in which the qualitative and quantitative methods have been triangulated in the mixed-methods approaches. In this study, we focused on the evaluation of the subjective perspective of ownerships and residents to serve the aim of describing and predicting their participatory behaviors. Then, the study pays to test this question that whether the subjective evaluation of the participants is correlated to three independent variables including the place attachment, concerns to preserve cultural identity and the importance of CP in the UHC initiatives. Findings demonstrated that the response to the question is positive. It also showed that whatever the variables increase, the participatory behavior is also increased respectively.

References

- Beierle, Thomas C. (1999). Using social goals to evaluate public participation in environmental decisions. *Review of Policy Research*, 16(3/4), 75-103.
- Beierle, Thomas C, & Cayford, Jerry. (2002). *Democracy in practice: Public participation in environmental decisions: Resources for the Future*.
- Bradbury, Judith A. (1998). Expanding the rationale for analysis and deliberation: looking beyond understanding risk. *Human Ecology Review*, 5, 42-44.
- Charnley, Susan, & Engelbert, Bruce. (2005). Evaluating public participation in environmental decision-making: EPA's superfund community involvement program. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 77(3), 165-182.
- Chess, Caron, & Purcell, Kristen. (1999). Public participation and the environment: Do we know what works? *Environmental Science & Technology*, 33(16), 2685-2692.
- Edwards, Peter B, Hindmarsh, Richard, Mercer, Holly, Bond, Meghan, & Rowland, Angela. (2008). A three-stage evaluation of a deliberative event on climate change and transforming energy. *Journal of public deliberation*, 4(1), 6.
- Kong, Lily, & Yeoh, Brenda SA. (1994). Urban conservation in Singapore: a survey of state policies and popular attitudes. *Urban Studies*, 31(2), 247-265.
- Mannarini, Terri, & Talò, Cosimo. (2013). Evaluating public participation: instruments and implications for citizen involvement. *Community Development*, 44(2), 239-256.
- Rowe, Gene, & Frewer, Lynn J. (2000). Public participation methods: A framework for evaluation. *Science, technology & human values*, 25(1), 3-29.
- Rowe, Gene, & Frewer, Lynn J. (2004). Evaluating public-participation exercises: a research agenda. *Science, technology & human values*, 29(4), 512-556.
- Steinberg, Florian. (1996). Conservation and rehabilitation of urban heritage in developing countries. *Habitat International*, 20(3), 463-475.
- Webler, Thomas. (1995). "Right" discourse in citizen participation: an evaluative yardstick: Springer.
- Webler, Thomas, & Tuler, Seth. (2001). Public participation in watershed management planning: Views on process from people in the field. *Human Ecology Review*, 8(2), 29.